

## September 11th Incident

Statement from Middlebury President Ron Liebowitz  
Sept. 12, 2013

To the Middlebury College Community,

Yesterday, on the 12th anniversary of the horrific attack on our nation on September 11, 2001, a group of Middlebury students commemorated the loss of nearly 3,000 lives by placing American flags in front of Mead Chapel as they have done a number of times in the past. Sadly, a handful of people, at least some of them from our campus community, this year chose to desecrate those flags and disrespect the memories of those who lost their lives by pulling the flags from the ground and stuffing them in garbage bags.

We live in an academic community that fosters and encourages debate and discussion of difficult issues. It is also a community that requires of all a degree of respect and civility that was seriously undermined and compromised by this selfish act of protest.

Like many of you, I was deeply disturbed by the insensitivity of this act. Destruction of property and interfering with the rights of others to express themselves violates the standards of our community. The College has begun a disciplinary investigation of this incident.

There is always something to learn from differences of opinion. In this case, the disrespectful methods of the protesters overshadowed anything that might have been learned from the convictions they claimed to promote. We will not tolerate this kind of behavior.

Ron Liebowitz

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